

Washington State Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety
Meeting Minutes
Location: Benton County Justice Center, Kennewick, Washington
October 20, 2005

Present

Katie Hansen, Chair
Carl Weimer, Vice Chair
Duane Henderson
George Hills
Richard Kuprewicz
Pete Kmet
Jim Clark
Grant Jensen
Leo Bowman
Chuck Mosher
Ken Thomas

Absent

Shirley Olson
Nate Moxley

Public present at the meeting

Robert Latimer, TransCanada GTN
Jon Mulvenon, Cascade Natural Gas
Alan Rathbun, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
Tim Sweeney, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
Rebecca Post, Washington State Department of Ecology

Agenda:

1. Adoption of July 19, 2005 Meeting Minutes
2. Welcome
3. WUTC Pipeline Safety Section Update
4. 2006 Legislative Session – Committee Process, Possible Legislation and Staff Initiatives
5. Distribution Integrity Management and Excess Flow Valves
6. Discussion of Next Steps relative to “Public Awareness/Right to Know”
7. Other Items of Interest, November Meeting Agenda and Public Comment

1. **Adoption of July 19, 2005 Meeting Minutes** – The meeting was brought to order. Committee member Richard Kuprewicz noted one edit to the minutes that were distributed. The Committee approved the minutes as amended.
2. **Welcome**– The Chair presented certificates of appreciation to members Ken Thomas and Chuck Mosher who will be leaving the Committee after several years of dedicated service.
3. **WUTC Pipeline Safety Update** – Alan Rathbun, WUTC Pipeline Safety Director, gave an update on the current events in the pipeline safety section.

Annual NAPSAR Meeting

The National Association of State Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSAR) met in Cleveland during the week of September 26. Attendees were updated on several pending national issues in the pipeline safety arena. The federal Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) is up for congressional reauthorization in 2006 and it is expected that additional mandates may result. OPS is currently in the formative stages of developing integrity management rules for gas distribution systems that would apply to Washington's four LDCs as well as three municipal gas distribution systems. Industry believes the major *integrity risk* they face is due to the lack of effective enforcement of "call before you dig" laws among states. It is possible that Congress will mandate enhanced enforcement by state government. Another controversial regulatory proposal is to require gas distribution companies to install excess flow valves (EFV) on all new natural gas services. These valves are designed to stop the flow of gas if the service fails catastrophically, most likely as a result of third party dig-in. This proposal is strongly supported by the National Transportation Safety Board and fire fighting officials.

Land Use Workshops

The Washington UTC Pipeline Safety Program, in partnership with the Association of Washington Cities, Washington Association of Counties, CTED and the Pipeline Safety Trust are providing free workshops this November to foster greater understanding about the effects of land use planning and practices around pipelines. These workshops are designed for leadership and staff responsible for city and county land use planning and decision making. The workshops will be interactive, both providing and seeking information to and from participants.

A case study will be used to identify the many issues faced when planning for new development around existing pipelines. These workshops also will serve as focus groups, allowing participants to evaluate draft land use guidelines for local governments, developers and pipeline operators. (Copies of the draft guidelines will be made available to those who sign up for the workshop.)

November 2, 2005 - Marysville
November 3, 2005 - Renton
November 4, 2005 - Vancouver
November 9, 2005 - Pasco
November 10, 2005 - Spokane

WUTC Enforcement Actions

- **PSE/Bellevue House Explosion:**

The commission has approved an agreement between Puget Sound Energy, the city of Bellevue and the pipeline safety program staff of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) which will close the agency's investigation into last year's natural gas incident which destroyed a Bellevue home and fatally injured its occupant.

The order approves an agreement by Puget Sound Energy (PSE) to pay a \$90,000 penalty. PSE also will conduct an assessment of all of its coated steel service lines installed more than five years prior to the use of cathodic protection systems. Cathodic protection systems protect pipelines against corrosion and have been mandatory for new natural gas pipelines installed since 1971. PSE records indicate that roughly 167,000 of its customers are served through coated steel pipe. It is not known at this time how many of these were installed five years prior to the use of cathodic protection, but the number is less than 167,000. The agreement also includes a

requirement for PSE to modify several elements of its procedures around operation and maintenance of cathodic protection systems.

PSE, in conjunction with the UTC's pipeline safety staff, will review leak history, field notes, soil data, maintenance records and other information to identify any facilities that may require more detailed study and possible replacement or other measures, such as more frequent leak surveys.

- **PSE/Pilchuck Investigation:**

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission has approved (Sept. 28, 2005) a settlement which includes a \$15,000 penalty, resolving a pipeline safety investigation into a natural gas pipeline construction-related injury that occurred last year.

The three-member commission approved an agreement between Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and the commission's pipeline safety staff regarding a June 22, 2004 incident in which an employee of Pilchuck Contractors (Pilchuck) was burned and hospitalized while purging gas from a newly installed PSE main.

Pilchuck Contractors was working in Seattle on June 22, 2004 when one of its employees was burned in a newly installed gas main. Because a vent pipe hadn't been installed as required by PSE's operating standards, gas flowed into a ditch. A pipe-fitter jumped into the hole to stop the flow of gas, but the pipe had not been grounded properly. Static electricity ignited the gas, seriously burning the Pilchuck employee.

Gas Safety Rule Tune-Up

The CR-102 was approved at the Commissions September 29, 2005 Open Meeting. Comments on the CR-102 are due October 26 with the adoption scheduled for the Open Meeting of November 9. For more information, contact Sondra Walsh (360-664-1286). This tune-up is designed to clarify and correct a few sections of the gas safety rules adopted this last June.

Williams NW Capacity Replacement Project

A final EIS was issued by FERC in July 2005. On August 3, the state Department of Ecology adopted the EIS issued by FERC. It is our understanding that Williams has obtained many of the necessary state and local permits. They hope to begin several Horizontal Directional Drills this fall (North Fork Nooksack, North and South Forks Stillaguamish. Construction on the remainder of the 79+ mile project will begin in 2006. Grant Jensen may have more information on this project.

Northern Star (Bradwood Landing) LNG Import Facility

A Notice of Intent has been filed with FERC by proponents of a LNG terminal facility at Bradwood Landing, Oregon. This site is on the Columbia River directly across from Puget Island and Cathlamet, Washington. Natural gas taken from this terminal will be piped approximately 34 miles to its proposed interconnection with Williams NW Pipeline in Cowlitz County north of Longview. The most recent pipeline route impacts approximately 170 Washington residents in Cowlitz County. The next step will be a draft Environmental Impact Statement by FERC.

Citizen Concerns Related to Pipeline Safety

Concerns raised by three Washington citizens concerning the safety of interstate transmission pipelines have resulted in specialized safety inspections and requests for information from the operators.

- Williams Colins Creek Crossing:

On August 17, at the request of concerned homeowners, Pipeline Safety staff conducted a site visit of the Williams Gas Pipeline aerial crossing located over Colin Creek, near the City of Woodinville. Citizens were concerned over a crack which they had observed on an exposed pipeline segment. The visit revealed that a weld on a casing in which the 30-inch pipeline is installed had failed causing the casing load to be transferred to the pipeline. In addition evidence of water within the space between the casing and pipeline may be adding additional load to the 30-inch line. Williams Gas Pipeline officials are aware of the condition and have indicated that this casing will be removed in conjunction with the replacement of the 26-inch pipeline segment scheduled for 2006. In order to properly evaluate the continued safety of this exposed pipeline segment, OPS, based on staff recommendations, has asked Williams to provide a copy of engineering analysis previously performed by the company on this casing. Further analysis by Williams considering additional load factors present as a result of the entrenched water located within the casing pipe must also be conducted if not previously considered.

- **Olympic Colony Creek Crossing:**

Remediation plans to protect an exposed segment of the Olympic 16-inch pipeline at Colony Creek, North Skagit County have been put on hold due to concerns over worker safety. A combination of recent storm activity and existing steep terrain caused Olympic and contractor representatives to put the project on hold due to worker safety concerns. The project has now been tentatively rescheduled for July 2006. Olympic Pipeline, in consultation with pipeline safety staff, the Federal Office of Pipeline Safety and Department of Ecology will be taking additional measures to ensure the integrity of the line segment during this interim period.

- **Williams – Skamania County Rock Quarry**

The Committee received an inquiry and request for assistance from residents of Skamania County relative to potential danger to Williams' 26-inch pipeline east of Washougal. A copy of the letter is distributed for your reference. Katie Hansen has spoken to Kathy Barnes, co-author of the letter. After discussion, the Committee directed the Chair write a response to the couple explaining the Committee's role, explaining what had been learned from Williams and copying the letter to both the UTC and Williams. Further, staff was asked to communicate with Williams expressing the Committee's desire that the company continue communication related to pipeline safety with both county planning and the rock quarry proponent.

4. 2006 Legislation – Committee Process, Possible Legislation and Staff Initiatives –

Tim Sweeney presented several topics:

- 1) UTC agency request legislation regarding inspector access to railroad facilities handling hazardous materials.
- 2) Status of expected legislation that would limit access to GIS pipeline mapping information.
- 3) Small gas pipeline safety study.

After discussion, the committee voted to endorse the UTC agency request legislation on agency inspector access to railroad facilities handling hazardous materials. Potential legislation on GIS/map security will be scheduled for discussion at the next Citizens Committee meeting. The small gas system study will also be discussed with the Committee as the study progresses.

5. Distribution Integrity Management (DIMP) and Excess Flow Valves – UTC Staff had distributed copies of the Pipeline Safety Trust's white paper on Excess Flow Valves to each of

Washington's local distribution companies and the three municipal gas operators. Comments were received from PSE, Avista and the Cities of Ellensburg and Enumclaw. Copies of these comments were distributed to the members. Member Kuprewicz reported that the direction of OPS on DIMP is not yet clear but he does not predict that Excess Flow Valves will be mandated by federal regulation. The Committee decided to postpone further discussion of this issue until a future meeting at which local distribution companies will be invited to make comments before the Committee.

6. **Discussion of Next Steps relative to "Public Awareness/Right to Know"** – The Committee took up the discussion of next steps. Given that pipeline maps appears to be a critical element of this discussion staff was asked to invite the Northwest Gas Association and other interest parties to the next meeting to discuss potential legislation. Member Kuprewicz expressed the thought that if security is a large concern that Homeland Security should be leading any effort to limit access. Staff offered to redistribute a matrix illustrating pipeline data in the possession of the UTC and OPS. This matrix was discussed at an earlier Citizens Committee meeting. The Committee also discussed the OPS stakeholder website which Kimbra Davis had demonstrated earlier in the year. The Chair was authorized to write a letter to Stacey Gerard of OPS congratulating her and her staff on the website and offering the suggestion that additional language version is provided.

7. **Other Items of Interest, November Meeting Agenda and Public Comment** – Member Chuck Mosher discussed his experience in learning about the "Hammer" facility as a training opportunity for first responders and others. Further he talked about Hydrogen power and safety concerns related to this alternative energy source. He also had the opportunity at a recent meeting to discuss the Citizens Committee with DOT Secretary Mineta and feels there is the opportunity to raise issues directly with him.

Robert Latimer of TransCanada discussed their recent experience in public awareness efforts involving mass mailing of brochures to approximately 30,000 recipients.

The next Citizens Committee meeting is scheduled for November 15 in Olympia (later rescheduled to December 5, 2005).